INCOMING TELEGRAM 31

United States Information Agency

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USIS and Embassy recommend promptest press, radio coverage without official attribution of wave of arrests here as reported in EMBTELs 234 January 22, 246 January 25 and 247 January 26. Suggest stressing that government suppression freedom of expression on air is strongly implied in arrests of Roberto Castillo, President of Association of Private Radio Station Owners and owner of Radio Ciros on January 23; Roberto Vizcaino, owner of Radio Continental, and Horacio de Cordoba, Director of program LA HORA ANTICOMUNISTA on January 25. Both Ciros and Continental have carried anti-Communist programs. Castillo released today but Vizcaino and Cordoba still held.

Imply arrests made arbitrarily and form part of campaign to intimidate anti-Communist opposition to Communist-influenced Arbenz administration. Avoid speculation concerning possible implication these persons in plotting against government. Refer Embassy despatches 824 February 14, 1952 and 1285 June 18, 1952 for background government persecution anti-Communist programs. Suggest consideration of investigation and protest by Inter-American Association of Radio Broadcasters.

Capture and holding of Villatoro, Coronado and Aguilar of Union Nacional de Trabajadores Libres should be treated as forthright government action against anti-Communist development of free labor movement outside Communist-dominated CGTG. Refer Embassy despatches 564 January 4 and 594 January 13 for background UNTL.

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